

L E T T E R

TO THE HONOURABLE

The COURT of DIRECTORS

O F

The EAST INDIA COMPANY.

RANELAGH, April 29, 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

YOUR secretary, Mr. Mitchell, acquainted me by your orders, on the 3^d of this month, "That you could not accept my proposals of indemnification for myself and officers, but that you were ready to receive and take into consideration any equitable claims I might have to offer you." Permit me to present my most respectful thanks for a determination so favourable to me, but at the same time to express my concern at being obliged thereby to unfold a transaction which I was willing to bury in oblivion.

As the equity of my claims must depend upon the whole circumstances of the transaction put together, I have drawn up a Narrative and Memorial, which is herewith laid before you; some errors of small moment may have escaped me in a paper of such length, but there is not a fact stated of any consequence, (however extraordinary some of them may appear) I have not the most ample proof of. They will but too surely convince every one who gives himself the trouble to examine them, that the Company as well as myself have been most egregiously deceived and injured.

If the Court of Directors had judged my proposals for raising a regiment in Britain, an indemnification to the Company as well as to the officers of my Swiss regiment, as I meant them to be, there would have been no call upon me to demonstrate by whom we had been injured, since the injury would then have no longer existed. But the equity of my claims depending on the question, — Whether the regiment's not reaching
England

England was owing to any fault of mine? — I am under the necessity of stating the causes of my regiment's being seized and restrained in Germany, in order to prove that they could not originate with me.

It will be very hard indeed, if after having done every thing in my power to avoid this explanation, I am notwithstanding considered as the accuser; and still harder, if it is surmised, that I should not upon the receipt of the like order from you some months ago, have held just the same language: in fact, I am the defender, and when aggrieved as I have been, cannot measure my words or actions by the degree of good or harm they may do me.

MY MEMORIAL SETS FORTH,

I. That my proposals and the grounds thereof, had been under discussion of the Cabinet for several months before the name of the East India Company came in question. (a)
(a) See from page 1 to 7.

II. That according to my proposals, accepted at the recommendation of his Majesty's Ministers by the Company, on the 27th of April, 1781, (b) I engaged for no more than that my regiment should be raised in time to reach England by the 1st of October following. (c)
(b) P. 7--10.
(c) P. 12-14.

III. That though I was kept by the Chairmen from proceeding to execute my engagement for more than a month after the signature; (d) my regiment was raised in time to reach England by the 1st of October. (e)
(d) P. 12.
(e) P. 25, 26, 28.

IV. That I signed the contract on the 28th of May, upon assurances that I should be in no worse situation than I stood in by the engagement signed the 27th of April preceding; and that the 27th of August was named therein for the day of muster, solely for the purpose of instigating my officers to hasten the levy, assurances being given me that I should not be kept to the day specified. (f)
(f) P. 12, 13, 14.

V. That more than the number of men I engaged to levy, were actually raised by the 27th of August, (g) notwithstanding the extreme pains taken by the court of France to prevent it. (h) That an accident I could neither foresee nor avoid, was the cause of my not being on the spot to tender the men raised for muster on the very day named in the contract; (i) but that only three days later,
(g) P. 25, 26.
(h) P. 19, 21.
(i) P. 27.

viz. on the 30th of August, I did tender 850 men, which Captain Toone was obliged to refuse to muster, by his orders being positive not to accept of any tendered after the 27th. (k)

(k) P. 43.

VI. That the commanding officer on the spot would have tendered in my absence the men at Rheinau, Singen, Godmantingen, Stein, Waldshut, Buchorn, and I myself those at Lauffen, on or before the 27th of August, if the letter, appointing Captain Toone to muster them, had been so directed as to authorize the said commanding officer to open it. (l)

(l) P. 25, 27.

VII. That of these men, 216 were seized by the Cantons of Zurich and Berne, (m) 150 by the Regency of Stochart, (n) and 700 by the Duke of Wirtemberg. (o)

(m) P. 29.

(n) P. 29, 32.

(o) P. 35, 36.

VIII. That the Company's orders received by Captain Toone, not to raise a single man after the 27th of August, prevented my re-engaging the men taken from me and dispersed by the Duke of Wirtemberg; (p) and likewise prevented my replacing the Swiss taken from me by the Cantons of Zurich and Berne by well-disciplined soldiers that were in my offer. (q) That the whole of these would in all human probability, have been in England before the 1st of October, if his Majesty's ministers had granted the protection promised, as soon as the levy was made, and the Chairmen had not sent orders by their muster-master contradictory to the spirit of my engagement.

(p) P. 36.

(q) P. 34, 41.

IX. That the Chairmen were induced to send me such orders, by a change of sentiment in his Majesty's ministers respecting the levy I was making by their orders; who, without giving me any notice thereof, resolved, "That my regiment should not be employed." (r)

(r) P. 42

44.

X. That my regiment, consisting of well-disciplined soldiers, was thus sacrificed, to make room for two others proposed after mine had been accepted; which his Majesty's ministers prevailed upon the Company to prefer, upon assurances, that they should consist of none other than Hanoverian soldiers, raised and be in England before mine. (s)

(s) P. 44.

XI. That, notwithstanding these assurances, neither of these regiments did consist of Hanoverian soldiers, but of raw undisciplined men, picked up in the several free towns throughout German; and that the whole of one of them has not yet reached England, from very unworthy causes, though the month of April 1782, is near expired. (t)

(t) P. 48, 49.

XII.

XII. That Major Muller and his family, Captains D'Erlach and Gratarall; Lieutenants D'Armine, Foulon, Rodarker, Curtat, Murét, and Baron Adelsheim are banished or ruined in consequence of their having served the East India Company of England to the utmost of their power, as well as myself and several other British officers. (u)

Your justice, Gentlemen, I am confident will incline you to give attention to my Memorial, and upon investigation to do your utmost to redress the hardships I set forth. Allow me to state that it is seven months since I have been soliciting it; that during all that time most of the gentlemen ruined in your service have been upon my hands, my losses consequently increasing every day: I do not complain of the delay, but you must be sensible that any farther will be the same as a refusal.

I have the honour to be,

With the greatest respect,

Your most obedient,

And most humble servant,

To the Honourable
The Court of Directors.

[Col. Erskine.]

